

PAST MASTER, OR FIFTH DEGREE

THIS degree in Masonry was instituted to try the qualifications of a Master Mason before becoming Master of a Lodge, and no Mason can constitutionally preside over a Lodge of Master Masons unless he has been admitted to this Degree. A Mason usually takes this Degree before offering himself as a candidate for presiding in a Master's Lodge; but should it so happen that a Mason is elected Master of a Lodge who is not a Past Master, the Past Master's Degree may be conferred upon him without any other ceremony than that of administering the obligation. In such a case it is usually done by Royal Arch Masons, acting by order of a Grand Master.

The Past Master's Lodge consists of seven officers; as follows:—

1. Right Worshipful Master; 2. Senior Warden; 3. Junior Warden; 4. Secretary; 5. Treasurer; 6. Senior Deacon; 7. Junior Deacon.¹

The interior arrangement is the same as in the first degree, and the officers are similarly seated. (See p. 8.)

¹ The regular officers of a Past Masters' Lodge correspond exactly with those of a Lodge of Master Masons.

The officers of a Chapter take rank in a Past Masters' Lodge as follows, viz.: the High Priest as Master; the King as Senior Grand Warden; the Scribe as Junior Grand Warden; the Treasurer and Secretary occupy the corresponding stations; the Principal Sojourner as Senior Deacon; the Royal Arch Captain as Junior Deacon, and the Tyler at his proper station.

The symbolic color of the Past Master's Degree is purple. The apron is of white lambskin, edged with purple, and should have the jewel of the Degree inscribed upon it. The collar is of purple, edged with gold. But, as Past Masters' Lodges are held under the warrants of Royal Arch Chapters, the collars, aprons, and jewels of the Chapter are generally made use of in conferring the Past Master's Degree.

When a Lodge of Past Masters is opened in due form, the ceremony is similar to that of a Master's Lodge. If there is a candidate in waiting he is usually introduced into the Lodge as though it were open on the Mark Master's Degree, and he is made a Past Master before he is aware of it. Since the many disclosures of this and other Degrees in Masonry, it requires a great deal of tact and ingenuity to confer this Degree so as to produce the effect desired. The candidate is elected to the Degree in the Royal Arch Chapter, as no business is permitted to be done in this Degree except that of initiation. Formerly it was the custom for all the members to wear their hats while conferring this Degree, but now no member wears his hat except the Right Worshipful Master. We will now proceed to give the manner of conferring this Degree "in old times," as described by Richardson, and, at the close, will give the reader an idea of the modern way of conferring it. By comparing this with Richardson's work, the initiated will perceive that we have made some trifling alterations, and corrected several errors which occur in that book.

A Master Mason wishing to enter on the Degree of Past Master, petitions the Chapter, and is balloted for in the same way that a candidate would be in one of the first Degrees; but he is received very differently. Having had the requisite ballot, the Junior Deacon conducts him into the Lodge, places him on a seat, and then repairs to his own station near the Senior Warden in the west. Soon after, a heavy alarm is given at the outer door.

J. D. (to the Master, rising).—There is an alarm at the outer door, Right Worshipful.

R. W. M.—Attend to the alarm, and see who comes there.

Junior Deacon goes to the door, and soon returns, bringing a letter to the Master, who opens it, and reads aloud to the Lodge as follows:—

DEAR BROTHER—Our dear mother has been taken suddenly very ill, and the physician despairs of saving her life. Come home immediately; do not lose a moment in delay.

Your affectionate sister,

ALICE.

R. W. M. (addressing the Lodge).—Brethren, you see by the tenor of this letter to me that it is necessary I should leave immediately. You must appoint some one to fill the chair, for I cannot stay to confer this Degree.

J. W.—Right Worshipful, I certainly sympathize with you for the afflicting calamity which has befallen your family, and am sorry that it seems so urgently necessary for you to leave; but could you not stop a few moments? Brother Gabe has come on purpose to receive this Degree, and expects to receive it. I believe he is in the room, and can speak for himself; and unless he is willing to put off the ceremony, I do not see how you can avoid staying.

The candidate, sympathizing with the Master, says he consents to wait, and by no means desires the Right Worshipful to stay one moment on his account.

J. W.—I thank our brother for his courtesy, but I have other reasons, Right Worshipful, why I desire you should stay to confer this Degree to-night. In the first place, it is uncertain when I myself shall be able to attend again—then we might not get so many brethren together at another meeting; and as this is a very difficult Degree to confer, I feel that you ought to stay.

R. W. M.—Brethren, it is impossible for me to stay. You will therefore appoint some one to fill the chair. There are a number of brethren present who are well qualified to confer the degree; you will therefore please to nominate.

J. W.—I nominate our Brother Senior Warden to fill the chair.

R. W. M.—Brethren, it is moved and seconded that Brother Senior Warden fill the chair this evening, to confer this Degree on Brother Gabe. All those in favor will signify it by saying aye. (Two or three of the members respond by saying aye.) Those opposed will say no. (Nearly all the members exclaim, No!) It is not a vote. Brethren will please nominate a new Master.

S. W.—I nominate Brother Junior Warden to fill the chair.

The Master puts the question with a similar result, when some member nominates Brother Gabe (the candidate), who is unanimously voted for and declared duly elected.

R. W. M.—Brother Gabe, you are elected Master of this Lodge. Will you please to step this way and take the chair?

The candidate goes forward to take the chair, when the Right Worshipful Master pushes him back, and says:

R. W. M.—Before you occupy the Master's chair, you must first assent to the ancient regulations, and take an obligation to discharge with fidelity the duty of Master of the Lodge.

The candidate having no objection, the Master addresses him as follows:—

1. You agree to be a good man and true, and strictly to obey the moral law?

2. You agree to be a peaceful subject, and cheerfully to conform to the laws of the country in which you reside?

3. You promise not to be concerned in any plots or conspiracies against government; but patiently to submit to the decisions of the supreme legislature?

4. You agree to pay a proper respect to the civil magistrates, to work diligently, live creditably, and act honorably by all men?

5. You agree to hold in veneration the original rules and patrons of Masonry, and their regular successors, supreme and subordinate, according to their stations, and to submit to the awards and resolutions of your brethren, when convened, in every case consistent with the Constitution of the Order?

6. You agree to avoid private piques and quarrels, and to guard against intemperance and excess?

7. You agree to be cautious in carriage and behavior, courteous to your brethren, and faithful to your Lodge?

8. You promise to respect genuine brethren, and discountenance impostors, and all dissenters from the original plan of Masonry?

9. You agree to promote the general good of society, to cultivate the social virtues, and to propagate the knowledge of the arts?

10. You promise to pay homage to the Grand Master for the time being, and to his office when duly installed, strictly to conform to every edict of the Grand Lodge, or general assembly of Masons, that is not subversive to the principles and groundwork of masonry?

11. You admit that it is not in the power of any man, or body of men to make innovations in the body of Masonry?

12. You promise a regular attendance on the committees and communications of the Grand Lodge, on receiving proper notice, and to pay attention to the duties of Masonry on all convenient occasions?

13. You admit that no new Lodge can be formed without permission of the Grand Lodge, and that no countenance be given to any irregular Lodge, or to any person clandestinely initiated therein, being contrary to the ancient charges of the Order?

14. You admit that no person can be regularly made a Mason in, or admitted a member of, any regular Lodge, without previous notice, and due inquiry into his character?

15. You agree that no visitors shall be received into your Lodge

without due examination, and producing proper vouchers of their having been initiated into a regular Lodge?

Do you submit to these charges, and promise to support these regulations, as Masters have done in all ages before you?

Candidate—I do.

R. W. M.—You will now take upon yourself the obligation of this Degree. Please to kneel at the altar.

The candidate is conducted to the altar, kneels on both knees, lays both hands on the Holy Bible, square, and compasses, and takes the following oath:

I, Peter Gabe, of my own free-will and accord, in presence of Almighty God, and this Worshipful Lodge of Past Master Masons, erected to him, and dedicated to the Holy Saints John, do hereby and hereon, most solemnly and sincerely promise and swear, in addition to my former obligations, that I will not give the secrets of a Past Master Mason, or any of the secrets pertaining thereto, to any one of an inferior Degree, nor to any person in the known world, except it be to a true and lawful brother, or brethren, Past Master Masons, or within the body of a just and lawfully constituted Lodge of such; and not unto him or unto them whom I shall hear so to be, but unto him and them only whom I shall find so to be, after strict trial and examination, or lawful information.

Furthermore do I promise and swear, that I will obey all regular signs and summonses sent, thrown, handed, or given from the hand of a brother of this Degree, or from the body of a just and lawfully constituted Lodge of Past Masters.

Furthermore do I promise and swear, that I will support the constitution of the General Grand Royal Arch Chapter of the United States; also, that of the Grand Chapter of the State in which this Lodge is located, and under which it is held, and conform to all the by-laws, rules, and regulations of this, or any other Lodge of which I may at any time become a member, so far as in my power.

Furthermore do I promise and swear, that I will not assist or be present at the conferring of this Degree upon any person who has not, to the best of my knowledge and belief, regularly received (in addition to the Degrees of Entered Apprentice, Fellow Craft, and Master Mason) the Degree of Mark Master, or been elected Master of a regular Lodge of Master Masons.

Furthermore do I promise and swear, that I will aid and assist all poor and indigent Past Master Masons, their widows and orphans, wherever dispersed around the globe, they applying to me as such, and I finding them worthy, so far as is in my power without material injury to myself or family.

Furthermore do I promise and swear, that the secrets of a brother of this Degree, delivered to me in charge as such, shall remain as secure and inviolable in my breast, as they were in his own before communicated to me, murder and treason excepted, and those left to my own election.

Furthermore do I promise and swear, that I will not wrong this Lodge, nor a brother of this Degree, to the value of one cent, knowingly, myself, nor suffer it to be done by others, if in my power to prevent it.

FIG. 25

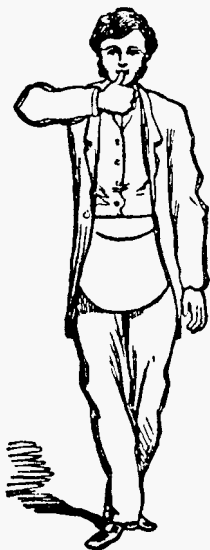


FIG. 26



DUEGARD AND STEP OF A PAST MASTER
SIGN OF A PAST MASTER

Furthermore do I promise and swear, that I will not govern this Lodge, or any other over which I may be called to preside, in a haughty and arbitrary manner; but will, at all times, use my utmost endeavors to preserve peace and harmony, among the brethren.

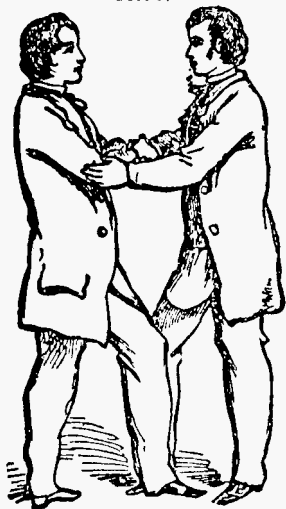
Furthermore do I promise and swear, that I will never open a

Lodge of Master Masons unless there be present three regular Master Masons, besides the Tyler; nor close the same without giving a lecture, or some section or part of a lecture, for the instruction of the Lodge.

Furthermore do I promise and swear, that I will not sit in a Lodge where the presiding officer has not taken the degree of Past Master Mason.

To all of which I do most solemnly and sincerely promise and swear, with a fixed and steady purpose of mind to keep and perform the same; binding myself under no less penalty than (in addition to all my former penalties) to have my tongue split from tip to root, that I might forever thereafter be unable to pronounce the word, should I ever prove wilfully guilty of violating any part of this my solemn oath, or obligation, of a Past Master Mason. So help me God, and make me steadfast to keep and perform the same.

FIG. 27



PAST MASTER'S GRIP

R. W. M. (to candidate).— Kiss the Book five times.

The obligation having been administered, the candidate rises, when the Master proceeds to give him the sign, word, and grip of this Degree, as follows:

R. W. M. (to candidate).— You now behold me approaching you from the east, under the step, sign, and duegard of a Past Master Mason.

The Master now steps off with his left foot, and then places the heel of his right foot at the toe of the left, so as to bring the two feet at right angles, and make them the right angle of a square. He then gives the sign, placing the thumb of his right hand (fingers clinched) upon his lips. It alludes to the penalty of having his tongue split from tip to root. (See Fig. 25, p. 189.)

The Master then gives a second sign by placing his right hand upon the left side of his neck, and drawing it edgewise downward toward the right side, so as to cross the three former penalties. (See Fig. 26, p. 189.)

R. W. M.—Brother, let me now have the pleasure of conducting you into the *oriental chair* of King Solomon. (Places a large cocked hat on his head, and seats him in a chair in front of the Master's chair.) That wise king, when old and decrepit, was attended by his two friends, Hiram, King of Tyre, and Hiram Abiff, who raised and seated him in his chair by means of the Past Master's grip. (See Fig. 27.)

The Master and Senior Warden now take the candidate by this grip, and raise him on his feet several times, each time letting him sit back in the chair again. The Senior Warden then goes back to his seat, the candidate rises, and the Right Worshipful Master instructs him in the grip and word of a Past Master Mason. They first take each other by the Master Mason's grip (see Fig. 17, p. 120), and, putting the insides of their feet together, the Master whispers GIBLEM¹ in the ear of the candidate. At that moment they slip their right hands so as to catch each other just above the wrist of the left arm, and raise their left hands, catching each other's right elbow, the Master saying, and the candidate repeating (in union with these motions), "From a grip to a span, from a span to a grip," afterward (almost at the same instant) letting the left hand slip up the right arm to the back of each other, the Master saying, "A threefold cord is strong," and the candidate (prompted) replying. "A fourfold cord is not easily broken." (See Fig. 27.)

The Right Worshipful Master seats the candidate in the Master's chair, places a hat on his head, and then comes down in front, and says:

Worshipful brother, I now present you with the furniture and various Masonic implements of our profession; they are emblematical of our conduct in life, and will now be enumerated and explained as presented.

The Holy Writings, that great light in Masonry, will guide you

¹ The Giblemites, or, as they are called in Scripture, the *Giblim*, were inhabitants of the city and district of Gebal, in Phœnicia, near Mount Lebanon, and were, therefore, under the dominion of the King of Tyre. The Phœnician word "*gibal*," which makes "*giblim*" in the plural, signifies a mason or stone-squarer. In the Second Book of Kings, v. 17, 18, we read that "the King commanded, and they brought great stones, costly stones, and hewed stones, to lay the foundation of the house. And Solomon's builders and Hiram's builders did hew them, and the stone-squarers," which last word is, in the original, *giblim*. Gesenius says that the inhabitants of Gebal were seamen and builders, and Sir William Drummond asserts that "the Giblim were Master Masons, who put the finishing hand to Solomon's Temple." In this sense the word is also used in the Book of Constitutions, which records that John de Spoulee, who, as one of the deputies of Edward III., assisted in rebuilding Windsor Castle, was called the "Master of the Giblim." The Giblim, or the Giblemites, were, therefore, stone-squarers or Master Masons.—*Book of the Chapter*, p. 56.

to all truth; it will direct your path to the temple of happiness, and point out to you the whole duty of man.

The Square teaches to regulate our actions by rule and line, and to harmonize our conduct by the principles of morality and virtue.

The Compasses teach to limit our desires in every station; thus rising to eminence by merit, we may live respected and die regretted.

The Rule directs that we should punctually observe our duty, press forward in the path of virtue, and neither inclining to the right nor to the left, in all our actions have eternity in view.

The Line teaches the criterion of moral rectitude; to avoid dissimulation in conversation and action, and to direct our steps to the path that leads to immortality.

The Book of Constitutions you are to search at all times; cause it to be read in your Lodge, that none may pretend ignorance of the excellent precepts it enjoins.

Lastly, you receive in charge the By-laws of your Lodge, which you are to see carefully and punctually executed. I will also present you with the Mallet; it is an emblem of power. One stroke of the mallet calls to order, and calls up the Junior and Senior Deacons; two strokes call up all the subordinate officers; and three, the whole Lodge.

R. W. M.—Brethren, please to salute your new Master.

All the brethren present, headed by the Master, now walk in front of the chair, give the sign of an Entered Apprentice, and pass on. This is repeated, with the sign of each Degree in Masonry up to that of Past Master.

R. W. M. (to candidate).—I now leave you to the government of your Lodge. (Master takes his seat with the brethren.)

The Senior Warden now steps forward and delivers up his jewel and his gavel to the new Master, and each of the other officers of the Lodge does the same, taking his turn according to rank. Presently the retired Master rises.

Retired Master (addressing the Chair).—Right Worshipful, in consequence of my resignation, and the election of a new Master, the seats of the Wardens have become vacant. It is necessary you should have Wardens to assist you in the government of your Lodge. I presume the brethren who have held these stations will continue to serve, if you so request.

The new Master requests the Senior Warden to resume his jewel and gavel, when the other officers (who had left their places) also resume their seats.

Retired Master—Right Worshipful, I would respectfully suggest to you, that as the office of Treasurer is one of considerable re-

sponsibility—he holding all the funds and property of the Lodge—you should direct that he be nominated and elected by the members present. This has been customary, and if you order a nomination to be made in this manner, I have no doubt that we shall select some one who will be satisfactory to you.

Candidate (acting as Master).—The brethren will please nominate a Treasurer for this Lodge.

Here a scene of confusion takes place, which is not easily described. The newly installed Worshipful is made the butt for every worthy brother to exercise his wit upon. Half-a-dozen are up at a time, soliciting the Master to nominate them, urging their several claims, and decrying the merits of others with much zeal; crying out, "Order, Worshipful! keep order!" Others propose to dance, and request the Master to sing for them; others whistle, or sing, or jump about the room; or scuffle and knock down chairs or benches. One proposes to call from labor to refreshment; another makes a long speech, advocating the reduction of the price of the Chapter Degrees from twenty dollars to ten, and recommending that it be permitted to pay for them in flour, or any other produce. His motion is seconded, and the new Master is pressed on all sides to put the question. If the question is put, the brethren all vote against it, and accuse the new Master of breaking his oath, when he swore he would support the Constitution of the General Grand Royal Arch Chapter, which establishes the price of the four Chapter Degrees at twenty dollars. If the Master attempts to exercise the power of the gavel, it often has the contrary effect; for if he gives more than one rap, and calls to order, every one obeys the signal with the utmost promptness, and drops on the nearest seat. The next instant, before the Master can utter a word, all are on their feet again, and as noisy as ever. Some brother now proposes that the Lodge be closed; another one hopes it will be closed in a short way.

Retired Master (to candidate).—Right Worshipful, it is moved and seconded that this Lodge be closed. You can close it as you please. You can merely declare the Lodge closed, or in any other way.

The candidate, being much embarrassed, will often attempt to close the Lodge by rapping with his gavel, and declaring it closed. Should he do so, the retired Master stops him as follows:

Retired Master—Right Worshipful, you swore in your obligation, that you would not close this or any other Lodge over which you should be called to preside, without giving a lecture or some part thereof. Do you intend to break your oath?

Candidate—I had forgotten that in this confusion. I hope the brethren will excuse me.

A brother goes and whispers to the candidate, telling him that he can resign the chair to the old Master, and have him close the Lodge, if he so prefers. The candidate is very glad to do this, and cheerfully abdicates his seat.

R. W. M. (resuming the chair).—Brother, the lesson we have just given, notwithstanding its apparent confusion, is designed to convey to you, in a striking manner, the necessity of at all times abstaining from soliciting, or accepting any office or station that you do not know yourself amply qualified to fill.

The Master now delivers the lecture in this Degree. It is divided into five sections. The first treats of the manner of constituting a Lodge of Master Masons. The second treats of the ceremony of installation, including the manner of receiving candidates to this Degree, as given above. The third treats of the ceremonies observed at laying the foundation-stones of public structures. The fourth section, of the ceremony observed at the dedication of Masonic Halls. The fifth, of the ceremony observed at funerals, according to the ancient custom, with the service used on the occasion. The lecture is usually read from a Monitor, which is kept in every Lodge. (See Lecture, page 197.)

The foregoing includes all the ceremonies ever used in conferring the Degree of Past Master; but the ceremonies are frequently shortened by the omission of some part of them; the presenting of the various implements of the profession, and their explanations, are often dispensed with; and, still more often, the charge.

Such is the manner in which this Degree was formerly conferred; but, as we have previously said, the ceremonies are now much abridged. The method of initiation to this Degree now usually adopted is as follows: The candidate for the Degree of Past Master is invited into a Lodge of Mark Masters, and as soon as he is seated, some one of the brethren rises and moves that the Lodge be closed. Another brother immediately gets up and proceeds to call the Master's attention to some unfinished business or the report of some committee. This action is all a *ruse*, and only intended to mislead the candidate from their real design. He (the candidate) sits there, thinking all the while that he is witnessing the regular business of a Mark Lodge, whereas he is in reality passing the preliminary steps of initiation. One of the brethren now moves an adjournment, another rises and opposes the motion, while a third asks the Chapter to help him with a loan of money. Some one of the members will oppose the loan, and high words frequently pass between the brethren (all for effect). Finally, the Right Worshipful Master will attempt to put to vote some resolutions on the subject, and a lengthy debate

ensues as to the legality of this disposition of the funds of the Chapter. After the debate has proceeded for some time, one of the brethren rises and accuses the Right Worshipful Master of corruption, and charges him in plain terms with being interested in obtaining the loan. Upon this the Right Worshipful Master indignantly repels the insinuation, and demands to be relieved from serving any longer as Master of the Lodge. Another scene of excitement then ensues—some of the brethren favor the removal of the Right Worshipful Master, while others advocate his retaining his position. Finally, the Right Worshipful Master refuses to serve under any consideration, and peremptorily resigns. Some of the members now urge the pretended late Right Worshipful Master to assist in instating his successor to office. This he consents to do. The candidate is then nominated, elected, and placed in the Oriental chair, etc. The balance of the Degree, from the election of the Master, is correct, as given by Richardson in the foregoing pages, only the candidate is very seldom treated so badly as is represented there. The candidate is usually relieved from embarrassment in good season by the retired Master, who resumes his seat and reads the following charge to him:—

BROTHER—The conferring at this time of a Degree which has no historical connection with the other capitular Degrees is an apparent anomaly, which, however, is indebted for its existence to the following circumstances:

Originally, when Royal Arch Masonry was under the government of symbolic Lodges, in which the Royal Arch Degree was then always conferred, it was a regulation that no one could receive it unless he had previously presided as the Master of that or some other Lodge; and this restriction was made because the Royal Arch was deemed too important a Degree to be conferred only on Master Masons.

But, as by confining the Royal Arch to those only who had been actually elected as the presiding officers of their Lodges, the extension of the Degree would have been materially circumscribed, and its usefulness greatly impaired, the Grand Master often granted, upon due petition, his dispensation to permit certain Master Masons (although not elected to preside over their Lodges) "to pass the chair," which was a technical term, intended to designate a brief ceremony, by which the candidate was invested with the mysteries of a Past Master, and, like him, entitled to advance in Masonry as far as the Royal Arch, or the perfection and consummation of the Third Degree.

When, however, the control of the Royal Arch was taken from the symbolic Lodges and intrusted to a distinct organization—

that, namely, of Chapters—the regulation continued to be observed, for it was doubtful to many whether it could legally be abolished; and, as the law still requires that the august Degree of Royal Arch shall be restricted to Past Masters, our candidates are made to pass the chair simply as a preparation and qualification toward being invested with the solemn instructions of the Royal Arch.

The ceremony of passing the chair, or making you in this manner a Past Master, does not, however, confer upon you any official rank outside of the Chapter, nor can you in a symbolic Lodge claim any peculiar privileges in consequence of your having received in the Chapter the investiture of the Past Master's Degree. Those who receive the Degree in symbolic Lodges as a part of the installation service, when elected to preside, have been properly called "Actual Past Masters," while those who pass through the ceremony in a Chapter, as simply preparatory to taking the Royal Arch, are distinguished as "Virtual Past Masters," to show that, with the investiture of the secrets, they have not received the rights and prerogatives of the Degree.

With this brief explanation of the reason why this Degree is now conferred upon you, and why you have been permitted to occupy the chair, you will retire, and suffer yourself to be prepared for those further and profounder researches into Masonry, which can only be consummated in the Royal Arch Degree.¹

If there is no further business, the lecture is delivered by the Right Worshipful Master, and the Lodge closed with the following prayer:²

¹ See Mackey's "Book of the Chapter."

² The chief object of this Degree in the United States is to exemplify the necessity of government, and to enforce upon the minds of those who are called to govern, the importance of qualifying themselves for the skillful and efficient discharge of their duties. The ceremonies of the Degree extend to no great length; but they are such as strongly to impress upon the newly elected Master a sense of his own deficiencies in the matter of government, and the need he has of promptness and energy in preserving the discipline of the Society over which he is to preside. The process of conferring the Degree, teaching by practical illustration, is apparently grave, though withal rather amusing. After the Lodge is opened upon the Third Degree, the Master receives intelligence from without that some sudden emergency demands his presence in another place. He therefore resigns the chair, and desires the brethren to elect a successor. The new Master is placed in the chair; but from various causes, too long to be enumerated here, he finds himself utterly unable to keep order, when the old Master reappears and kindly relieves him from his embarrassment, by teaching him how to command obedience; for it frequently happens that, in the plenitude of his power, a scrupulous compliance with his own ignorant and inopportune mandates has occasioned the very confusion which had appalled him.—*Historical Landmarks*, vol. II, p. 128.

PAST MASTERS—An honorary Degree conferred on the W. (*Worshipful*) Master, at his installation into office. In this Degree, the necessary instructions are conferred

Supreme Architect of the Universe, accept our humble praises for the many mercies and blessings which Thy bounty has conferred on us, and especially for this friendly and social intercourse. Pardon, we beseech Thee, whatever Thou hast seen amiss in us since we have been together, and continue to us Thy presence, protection and blessing. Make us sensible of the renewed obligations we are under to love Thee supremely, and to be friendly to each other. May all our irregular passions be subdued, and may we daily increase in Faith, Hope, and Charity, but more especially in that Charity which is the bond of peace, and the perfection of every virtue. May we so practise Thy precepts that we may finally obtain Thy promises, and find an entrance through the gates into the temple and city of our God. So mote it be. Amen.

LECTURE ON THE FIFTH, OR PAST MASTER'S DEGREE.—PART OF THE SECOND SECTION¹

Question. Are you a Past Master?

Answer. I have the honor so to be.

Q. How gained you this distinguished honor?

A. By having been regularly elected and duly installed to preside over and govern a Lodge of Free and Accepted Masons. Previous to my installation I was caused to kneel at the altar in due form, and take upon myself a solemn oath or obligation to keep and conceal the secrets belonging to the chair.

Q. What is that due form?

A. Kneeling upon both knees, both hands covering the Holy Bible, square and compasses, my body erect; in which due form I took upon myself the solemn oath or obligation of a Past Master.

Q. Have you that obligation?

A. I have.

Q. Will you give it?

A. I will, with your assistance.

Q. Proceed. I, A. B., &c., &c. (See obligation of a Past Master.)

respecting the various ceremonies of the Order, such as installations, processions, the laying of corner-stones, etc. The ceremonies of the Degree, when properly conferred, inculcate a lesson of diffidence in assuming the responsibilities of an office without a due preparation for the performance of its duties.—*Lexicon*.

¹ This portion of the second section of the Lecture on the Fifth Degree relates to the induction of candidates, and is not given in the Monitors. With the exception of this, the Lecture may be found in "Webb's Monitor."

Q. Have you a sign belonging to the Chair?

A. I have several.

Q. Show me a sign? (Give sign, thumb to mouth.)

Q. What is that called?

A. The duegard.

Q. To what does it allude?

A. To the penalty of my obligation, that I would sooner have my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth, than divulge any of the secrets belonging to the chair unlawfully.

Q. Show me another sign? (Give sign, drop your hand in from mouth in a circular manner down over your breast to your right side.)

Q. What is that called?

A. The sign.

Q. To what does it allude?

A. To the additional portion of the penalty of my obligation, that I would sooner suffer the severest inflictions of all my former penalties, than divulge any of the secrets belonging to the chair unlawfully.

Q. Have you a grip belonging to the chair?

A. I have.

Q. Communicate it to a brother. (Give the Past Master's grip. See the grip.)

Q. Has it a name?

A. It has.

Q. Give it. (Give the word. See word of Past Master.)

Q. What does it signify?

A. Stone squarer.

Q. What were you presented with?

A. The jewel of my office—which is a square, and it was hoped I would prepare a square stone in the Temple of Masonry.

Q. What were you next presented with?

A. The three great lights in Masonry, the Holy Bible, square and compasses. Within that sacred volume I would find all that was necessary for my counsel and guidance, these three great lights I was always to see in proper position when the lodge was open. If in the E. A. degree, that both points of the compasses are beneath the square; if in the F. C. degree, one point is elevated above the square; if in the Master's degree, both points are elevated above the square.

Q. What were you next presented with?

A. The charter or warrant, which would empower me to do all regular Masonic work.

Q. What were you next presented with?

A. The constitution, which I was carefully to search, and see that it was not infringed.

Q. What were you next presented with?

A. The By-laws, which I was to carefully search and see that they were strictly enforced.

Q. What were you next presented with?

A. The records, which I was to see carefully kept, that nothing improper be transmitted to paper, and have a general supervision over the duties of the secretary.

Q. What were you next presented with?

A. I, as Master should be covered;¹ while the rest of the brethren remained uncovered.

Q. What were you next presented with?

A. Last, but not least, I was presented with the gavel, which I was informed was an emblem of power, one blow of which would call the Lodge to order; and in opening and closing, the deacons would arise; two blows would call up the rest of the subordinate officers, on three blows, the whole Lodge; one blow would again seat them and call the Lodge to order.

Q. How were you then disposed of?

A. I was conducted to the chair, once so ably filled by our Grand Master Solomon, King of Israel, and it was hoped that a portion of his wisdom would rest upon and abide with me.

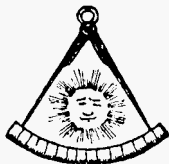
Q. What are the duties of the chair?

A. They are many and various.

Q. Of what do they consist?

A. In opening, instructing and closing Lodges; of initiating, crafting, and raising Masons; presiding at consecrations, dedications and installations; at the laying of corner stones of public edifices; presiding at funeral obsequies, and all other duties corresponding thereunto and connected therewith.

¹ A hat.



PAST MASTER'S JEWEL